

VZCZCXRO8272

PP RUEHAG RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHRO #1180 2961300

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 231300Z OCT 09

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2802

INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 0805

RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0345

RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0457

RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY 0281

RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 1602

RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA PRIORITY 0200

RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 3857

RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 0289

RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 4070

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1041

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001180

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/20/2019

TAGS: PREL PTER IT SO XW ER

SUBJECT: SOMALIA: PRODDING ERITREA TO PLAY A MORE
CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Elizabeth Dibble for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d).

¶11. (U) This cable is a guidance request. Please see paragraph
¶15.

¶12. (C) SUMMARY: On October 19, DCM Dibble met with MFA DG for Sub-Saharan Africa, Giuseppe Morabito, to discuss strategies for making the Eritrean government's (GSE) role in Somalia "more positive." The GOI does not want to single out (for sanctions or otherwise) the GSE as being directly responsible for supporting the Shabab insurgents currently fighting against AMISOM and government forces in Somalia. The GOI believes such an approach would be ineffective and would further isolate the Eritrean leadership. Instead, the GOI favors maintaining an open channel of communication through enhanced political dialogue and being "flexible in case of positive signals from Asmara." This effort to engage in a positive manner does not preclude supporting other measures to eliminate, or at least limit, assistance to the Shabab from entities outside of Somalia. Morabito would support a no-fly zone and port blockade that prevented weapons from entering Somalia. DCM Dibble indicated she would convey Morabito's suggestions and relay any feedback. END SUMMARY
Italy Supports the TFG

¶13. (SBU) The GOI states that it fully supports the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia (as outlined in its position paper distributed at the September 23, 2009 extraordinary meeting of the International Contact Group (ICG) on Somalia) and is eager to work with the USG in stabilizing the region. The GOI has honored its pledges of support and is planning to send a technical mission to assess the re-opening of an embassy in Mogadishu as announced at the ICG meeting in Rome in June 2009, (assuming the security requirements can be met without breaking the bank). The GOI will continue its contributions to AMISOM and Somali Security Forces through the Italian Africa Peace Facility. The GOI also intends to offer a training program in Nairobi to the Somali police force with Italian Carabinieri, as well as a training program for ten Somali customs officers in Italy with Guardia di Finanza. The GOI states that it will explore bi-lateral financing to "key" Somali ministries.
Use the Carrot, But No Stick Yet

¶14. (C) As Shabab insurgents continue attacks against AMISOM and the security forces of the UN-recognized TFG of Somalia, the GOI has offered to leverage its "special relationship" with the GSE should the USG request such assistance. Notwithstanding this offer to serve as an "honest broker"

between the GSE and the USG, the GOI is reluctant to employ severe language or measures against the GSE out of a concern that such an approach would leave that government more isolated. A UNSC resolution which includes sanctions against Eritrea or specific politicians (such as Yemane Ghebreab, named by Morabito) risks "backing the country into a corner."

The GOI estimates that such marginalization could subsequently leave the GSE vulnerable to advances from Iran and non-state Arab actors in an attempt to impose a fundamentalist regime.

¶5. (SBU) Guidance Request. Post requests guidance on how to most effectively manage Eritrea's currently unhelpful involvement in Somalia and enhance stability in the Horn of Africa.

THORNE